



Department of Energy

Bonneville Power Administration
P.O. Box 3621
Portland, Oregon 97208-3621

EXECUTIVE OFFICE

AUG 19 2014

In reply refer to: KEW-4

C.L. "Butch" Otter, Governor
State of Idaho
State Capitol
P.O. Box 83720
Boise, ID 83720

Dear Governor Otter:

I am responding on behalf of Brigadier General Kem and myself to your August 13, 2014, letter to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) and the Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) about operations of Albeni Falls Dam and Lake Pend Oreille lake level management. We are committed to working with you and the communities of northern Idaho to resolve the complex and sometimes competing interests in the management of Lake Pend Oreille levels. We will continue to engage stakeholders through the Lakes Commission and other public forums.

We wanted to respond to your letter at our earliest convenience because these issues are important, and the degree of misunderstanding about operations as well as our respective legal obligations is significant.

The current operation of Albeni Falls Dam is fully consistent with the project's authorizing legislation, all subsequent legislation related to operations at the project, as well as the associated Federal Columbia River Power System Biological Opinions. The Corps will continue to provide information regarding these operations to the Lakes Commission and the public, including explaining the requirements driving both year round operations and end of summer operations. We acknowledge that community members would like to see the lake at full pool for a longer duration each year; however, summer pool elevations are constrained by other responsibilities such as fisheries and flood risk management. We share your desire to engage openly with the public regarding lake level management. We believe that continued dialogue and coordination can result in a satisfactory process regarding lake level management discussions. We look forward to continued coordination with the Lakes Commission and the general public.

BPA and the Corps also remain committed to our Columbia Basin Fish Accords, including our Accords with the State of Idaho and the Kalispel Tribe. We are currently working with the Kalispel Tribe through our MOA to identify effective and implementable actions to improve conditions for bull trout, including fish passage at Albeni Falls Dam and habitat restoration, while

being mindful of our overall project requirements. As said above, BPA and the Corps value the opportunity to discuss water management issues which may arise with stakeholders, including the State of Idaho, the Kalispel Tribe, and the general public.

We also respect Idaho's interest and concerns about the future of the Columbia River Treaty, and appreciate Idaho's participation in the development of the Regional Recommendation.

In sum, we understand the importance of the issues you raised in your letter. We believe there remains a need to improve the understanding of current lake operations and their consistency with our legal requirements. We look forward to working closely with the State of Idaho and continuing to coordinate regarding operations at Albeni Falls Dam. We have been in contact with Idaho's representative on the Northwest Power and Conservation Council, Bill Booth, and will further coordinate with him regarding a meeting in Sandpoint per your request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Elliot Mainzer".

Elliot E. Mainzer
Administrator and Chief Executive Officer

cc:

The Honorable Shawn Keough
J. Ford Elsaesser
Bill Booth